



# Chester County Department of Aging Services



"Like branches on a tree we grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one.  
Each of our lives will always be a special part of the other." - Anonymus

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April 2012

## Director's Corner

### Wanda Stonebraker

Director, Chester County Department of Aging Services

Happy Spring! It was not a very harsh winter but I am sure glad it is over. I love the warmer weather, the sun not hitting me square in the eyes as I travel east to work and especially the longer days. I will be able to play some very bad golf soon and am trying to get back into running. That's hard though. Some days I think my get up and go actually got up and went.

I was talking with someone I really enjoy a month or so ago. We are both getting up in years and were talking about when we first started to notice we were aging. I can't speak for her but I have been giving this some thought.

I do remember the first time I realized I was not exactly a young woman anymore. I was working for a not for profit agency and happened to be doing a monitoring visit on someone who was 60 years old and transitioning to Aging. As I was driving back to my office it suddenly hit me, '...in X years (no I am not telling you how many), I will be eligible for Aging services.' I was completely shocked!!

Then there are the kids. "Mom, you need to strengthen your core." I fall a lot. I fall going up the stairs, down the

(See Directors Corner, page 2)



## MAY 2012 Older Americans Month!!

May is Older Americans Month, a perfect opportunity to show our appreciation for the older adults in our community. Since 1963, communities across the nation have joined in the annual commemoration of Older Americans Month—a proud tradition that shows our nation's commitment to celebrating the contributions and achievements of older Americans.

**The theme for Older Americans Month 2012—*Never Too Old to Play!***—puts a spotlight on the important role older adults play in sharing their experience, wisdom, and understanding, and passing on that knowledge to other generations in a variety of significant ways.

As large numbers of baby-boomers reach retirement age, many communities have increased their efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for older adults—many of whom remain physically and socially active through their 80s and beyond. Current trends show that people over age 60 account for an ever-growing percentage of participants in community service positions, faith-based organizations, online social networking as well as arts and recreational groups.

Lifelong participation in social, creative, and physical activities has been shown to have health benefits, including retaining mobility, muscle mass, and cognitive abilities. But older adults are not the only ones who benefit from their engagement in community life. Studies show their interactions with family, friends, and neighbors across generations enrich the lives of everyone involved. Young people who have significant relationships with a grandparent or elder report that these relationships helped shape their values, goals, and life choices and gave them a sense of identity and roots.

**In conjunction with the national celebration of Older Americans Month, Chester County Department of Aging Services is hosting a Centenarian Birthday Celebration at the Downingtown Senior Center on May 16, 2012. If you or someone you know is a Chester County resident and age 100 or older, please let us know so we can send a formal invitation! RSVPs are required.**

**For more information please contact Kelly Miehl at 610-344-6672. ■**

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The Chester County Department of Aging Services is funded by the Chester County Commissioners, PA Department of Aging, and private contributions.

**Chester County Commissioners  
Terence Farrell, Kathi Cozzone, Ryan A. Costello**

( Director's Corner continued from page 1 )

stairs and often over my own feet. This has been a lifelong thing, either because I'm too busy, not paying attention or moving too fast. Both daughters know this; they grew up seeing me on crutches with sprained ankles or in slings with rotator cuff injuries. Not one time did I hear a word about my core. Frankly, I doubt if I even knew what 'my core' was back then.

I know I can do the things I used to do, but not as much or as fast and sometimes not without some pain. The hair is gray, the shell is sagging but the heart feels just the same. I believe there are definite advantages to aging.

I can absolutely enjoy my grands. I don't have to worry about them, we can play dolls or shoot some baskets or crawl on the floor or run through the house or play laser tag. The best fun I have had in years.

I am not in such a hurry any more. I can reflect on the gifts I have been given, appreciate what I have and miss those I have lost. I hope that doesn't mean I am growing up!

Take care, enjoy whatever you can and take pleasure in what you have. Sometimes we have to look hard but it's there. ■

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I welcome any comments or suggestions you may have about our newsletter. You can email me at [wstonebraker@chesco.org](mailto:wstonebraker@chesco.org)



## Centenarian Birthday Celebration!

To keep the heart unwrinkled, to be hopeful, kindly, cheerful, reverent - that is to triumph over old age.  
-- Thomas Bailey Aldrich

To celebrate May, which is Older Americans Month, The Chester County Department of Aging Services is hosting a birthday party at the Downingtown Senior Center for all Chester County Centenarians. If you or someone you know is a Chester County resident and age 100 or older, please let us know so we can send a formal invitation! The party will be **May 16, 2012**, 11:30am to 12:30pm. **Reservations are required.** For more information please contact Kelly Miehl at 610-344-6672.

The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age. -- Lucille Ball



## PA Lottery and Department of Aging Celebrate 40 Years of Benefiting Older Pennsylvanians

In March 1972, Don McLean's "American Pie" was a radio hit, a gallon of gas cost just 36 cents and the first Pennsylvania Lottery tickets were sold. Forty years later, the Lottery and the Department of Aging joined to celebrate the anniversary and the life-changing benefits that Lottery proceeds continue to provide to older Pennsylvanians, every day.

**"Over the past 40 years, Lottery has generated more than \$21.5 billion in funding for programs benefiting older Pennsylvanians, and the Pennsylvania Lottery is proud to stand alone as the only Lottery in the nation that designates all proceeds to programs that help our seniors," said Lottery Executive Director Todd Rucci.**

The Lottery was created in the early 1970s to fund property tax relief for seniors, and over the course of the last four decades, the Lottery has generated more than \$58.7 billion in sales and more than \$21.5 billion in proceeds for programs that have grown to include property tax and rent rebates; free transit and reduced-fare shared rides; the low-cost prescription drug programs PACE and PACENET; long-term living services; and the 52 Area Agencies on Aging, including hundreds of full- and part-time senior centers throughout the state.

**"To illustrate the expansive support the Pennsylvania Lottery has provided over the years to older Pennsylvanians, consider that Lottery funding has helped provide 230 million prescriptions to 1.3 million older Pennsylvanians since the PACE program began in 1984, and nearly 16 million property tax and rent rebates totaling \$4.8 billion have been issued to low-income elderly residents since 1971," said Secretary of Aging Brian Duke. "We are very fortunate to have Lottery funding that helps ensure programs and services continue for those most in need."** ■

Source: Pennsylvania Lottery

**The Pennsylvania Lottery reminds its players to play responsibly. Players must be 18 or older.**





***Election Year Politics and Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act Will Play Key Role in the Lives of Older Adults this Year***

With Congress back in session and the presidential election year in full swing, the National Council on Aging (NCOA) encourages older adults and their caregivers to advocate for key issues that could greatly affect their lives, and their livelihoods. While Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security are top priorities, and will likely receive the bulk of media attention, NCOA doesn't anticipate any significant movement on these issues in 2012. However, NCOA has developed a list of the top 6 issues that seniors should understand, track, and speak out on in 2012:

**1. Older Americans Act (OAA)**

The OAA is up for reauthorization, which offers a prime opportunity to strengthen and modernize aging services to ensure that we meet the diverse needs of our growing older population—especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. The OAA funds critical, cost-effective programs that allow seniors to stay healthy and independent in their communities. These include job training and placement (under the Senior Community Service Employment Program - SCSEP), health promotion and disease prevention, senior nutrition programs, senior centers, caregiver support, and more.

**2. Extensions of Medicare Low-Income Protections, “Doc Fix,” and Unemployment Insurance**

At the end of last year, Congress passed a bill to extend until Feb. 29 several programs that provide key benefits to the most vulnerable older adults. These programs have now been extended until the end of 2012. They include the Qualified Individual (QI) program, which helps disadvantaged seniors pay their Medicare Part B premiums; Medicare physician payments (the “doc fix”), to prevent serious cuts in payments to doctors under Medicare; and Unemployment Insurance benefits to continue support for individuals struggling to find work. Seniors should also be mindful that some want to cut Medicare or prevention benefits to pay for these and other extensions.

**3. Senior Program Funding Cuts**

Budget cuts over the past year have significantly affected the most vulnerable older adults, with major reductions in housing, energy, and employment assistance for low-income seniors. The combination of these funding cuts, a rapidly growing senior population, and increased demand for economic assistance means millions of older adults will not get the services they need to make ends meet. Funding for senior programs will continue to be in jeopardy throughout the year.

**4. Long-Term Care**

As part of the Affordable Care Act, Congress passed a new voluntary, long-term care insurance program called the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Program (CLASS). CLASS would allow individuals to plan for long-term services as they age and remain at home rather than being forced to spend-down their life savings or enter a nursing home. However, implementation of CLASS has been suspended. Some opponents in Congress believe the program should be repealed, but have offered nothing in its place to address the growing problem that millions of families and caregivers struggle with every day. NCOA and a broad range of organizations representing seniors and people with disabilities believe CLASS can be fixed and must not be repealed – at least until a consensus can be developed on a viable alternative.

**5. Access to Preventive Benefits**

In addition to funding for senior health promotion and disease prevention under the OAA, some members of Congress have tried to repeal or significantly cut other preventive benefits. For example, the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which includes resources for proven chronic disease self-management programs for seniors, has been specifically targeted for repeal and major budget cuts. The Senate also proposed last year to include new investments for elder falls prevention under this fund. The proposed repeals of health care reform also would mean elimination of the new Medicare annual wellness visit and increased copayments for other preventive services that are now free under Medicare.

**6. Hunger and Food Insecurity**

In addition to funding for Meals on Wheels, congregate meals programs, and food banks, renewal of agriculture legislation (the Farm Bill) provides an opportunity to increase access to nutrition assistance for seniors. Only one-third of low-income seniors who are eligible currently participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; formerly Food Stamps). Changes that can increase access and benefits include altering eligibility rules, increasing the minimum benefit, streamlining and modernizing applications, and enhancing access to healthy food options. However, in the name of deficit reduction, some in Congress are likely to propose reducing access to these benefits.

“America’s seniors have never been a group to stay silent,” said Jim Firman, NCOA president and CEO. “Collectively, they can help raise the voices of millions of older adults and fight for much-needed services and supports for our most vulnerable population.”

For tips on how to advocate, additional information on these issues and more please visit [www.ncoa.org/Toolkit](http://www.ncoa.org/Toolkit). ■



## Aging And Your Eyes

*Age can bring changes that affect your eyesight. Some changes are more serious than others, but there are things you can do to protect your vision.*

### Steps To Protect Your Eyesight

Have your eyes checked regularly by an eye care professional—either an ophthalmologist or optometrist. *People over age 65 should have yearly eye exams.* If you wear glasses, your prescription should be checked too.

See your doctor regularly to check for diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure. These diseases can cause eye problems if not treated.

*See an eye care professional right away if you:*

- *Suddenly cannot see or everything looks blurry*
- *See flashes of light*
- *Have eye pain*
- *Experience double vision*
- *Have redness or swelling of your eye or eyelid*

Protect your eyes from too much sunlight when you are outdoors by wearing sunglasses that block ultraviolet (UV) radiation and a hat with a wide brim.

### Common Eye Problems

The following common eye problems can be easily treated. But, sometimes they can be signs of more serious issues.

- **Presbyopia** (prez-bee-OH-pee-uh) is a slow loss of ability to see close objects or small print. It is normal to have this as you get older. People with presbyopia often have headaches or strained, tired eyes. Reading glasses usually fix the problem.
- **Floaters** are tiny specks or “cobwebs” that seem to float across your vision. Floaters can be a normal part of aging. But sometimes they are a sign of a more serious eye problem such as retinal detachment. If you see many new floaters and/or flashes of light, see your eye care professional right away. This is a medical emergency.
- **Tearing** (or having too many tears) can come from being sensitive to light, wind, or temperature changes, or having dry eyes. Wearing sunglasses may help, as might trying eye drops. Sometimes tearing is a sign of a more serious eye problem, like an infection or a blocked tear duct. Your eye care professional can treat these problems.
- **Eyelid problems** can result from different diseases or conditions. Common eyelid problems include red and swollen eyelids, itching, tearing, and crusting of eyelashes during sleep. These problems may be caused by a condition called blepharitis (ble-fa-RI-

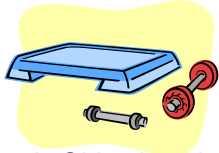
tis) and treated with warm compresses and gentle eyelid scrubs.

### Eye Diseases And Disorders

The following eye conditions can lead to vision loss and blindness. They may have few or no early symptoms. Regular eye exams are your best protection. If your eye care professional finds a problem early, there are things you can do to keep your eyesight.

- **Cataracts** are cloudy areas in the eye's lens causing blurred or hazy vision. Some cataracts stay small and don't change your eyesight a lot. Others become large and reduce vision. Cataract surgery can restore good vision. Your eye care professional will watch for changes over time to see if you would benefit from surgery.
- **Corneal diseases and conditions** can cause redness, watery eyes, pain, problems with vision, or a halo effect of the vision (things appear to have an aura of light around them). Treatment may be simple—for example, changing your eyeglass prescription or using eye drops. In severe cases, surgery may be needed.
- **Dry eye** happens when tear glands don't work well. You may feel itching, burning, or other discomfort. Your eye care professional may tell you to use a home humidifier, special eye drops (artificial tears), or ointments to treat dry eye.
- **Glaucoma** often comes from too much fluid pressure inside the eye. If not treated, it can lead to vision loss and blindness. You can protect yourself by having regular dilated eye exams. Glaucoma can be treated with prescription eye drops, lasers, or surgery.
- **Retinal disorders** are a leading cause of blindness in the United States. Retinal disorders that affect aging eyes include:
  - **Age-related macular degeneration**, or AMD. AMD can harm the sharp vision needed to see objects clearly and to do common things like driving and reading. If you have AMD, ask if special dietary supplements could lower your chance of it getting worse.
  - **Diabetic retinopathy**. If you have diabetes, be sure to have a dilated eye exam at least once a year. Keeping your blood sugar under control can prevent diabetic retinopathy or slow its progress. Laser surgery can sometimes prevent it from getting worse.
  - **Retinal detachment**. THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY. When the retina separates from the back of the eye, it's called retinal detachment. If you see new floaters or light flashes, or if it seems like a curtain has been pulled over your eye, go to your eye care professional right away. With surgery or laser treatment, doctors often can prevent loss of vision.■

Source: National Institute on Aging



## EXERCISE FOR SENIORS

May is Older Americans Month and this year's theme is 'never too old to play'. Exercise can have profound effects on a senior citizen's overall well-being. Older adults who exercise are more mobile and independent.

**Senior citizens need to get a mix of four types of exercise: endurance, strengthening, stretching and balance.** Your routine can be simple and does not have to involve elaborate or expensive equipment.

### Endurance

Endurance exercises, which benefit the heart and circulatory system, include walking, bicycling, swimming and dancing. Rebounding on a mini trampoline can be an ideal exercise for senior citizens as well, because it is gentle while being highly beneficial to the body. If you are already active and physically fit, try more strenuous endurance exercises, such as hiking, jogging or tennis. Exercise with a buddy who can keep you motivated and provide valuable social interaction. Exercising outdoors can be preferable, depending on the weather and season, because you get much-needed fresh air and vitamin D from sunlight at the same time.

### Strengthening

Strengthening activities, which build muscles, boost metabolism and strengthen bones, include lifting free weights, using resistance bands, squatting while holding onto the side of a chair or doing push-ups on the wall. Metabolism slows as a person ages, but strengthening exercise can counteract that and help with weight loss as well. Strong bones are necessary for preventing osteoporosis and bone loss, and strong muscles can help you in completing everyday tasks such as lifting groceries and doing housework. Joining a strengthening exercise class at the local gym, city recreation center or senior center can provide the added perk of social interaction, which is highly important for seniors.

### Stretching

Maintaining flexibility is a key benefit of stretching exercises, which can include a unique discipline such as yoga or Pilates, or be incorporated as a preface to the other three types of exercise. Always stretch before starting your endurance and strengthening exercises. For a simple stretch, sit close to the front end of a chair and lean back on your hands. Stretch your legs out straight in front of you. Stretch your feet and ankles by extending your feet toward and then away from your body. Some venues offer stretching exercise classes designed specifically for senior citizens, with exercises and intensity levels appropriate for older adults.

### Balance

Balance exercises can minimize the risk of falls, which can result in serious complications for seniors. They can also improve posture and body mechanics. Some simple balance exercises that you can do anywhere without equipment include standing on one foot, and getting up and down from a chair without holding onto the chair. You can also try walking heel to toe, by placing your heel directly in front of the toes of your opposite foot as you walk.

### Considerations

Stay well hydrated while exercising by drinking plenty of fresh, clean water. You're never too old to begin or resume an exercise program. Senior citizens who have not exercised recently can still get into shape and feel better in the process. Seniors should use a great deal of caution when exercising, especially when just beginning to get more active after a sedentary spell. To reduce the risk of injuries and falls, start slowly and gradually build up to more repetitions and more challenging exercises in your routine. Stop exercising immediately and contact your health practitioner if you develop symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath or dizziness, or if you fall or injure yourself while exercising. ■

Source: <http://www.livestrong.com>

## Senior Art Show!!

Celebrate May,  
Older Americans Month and  
Senior Center Week!

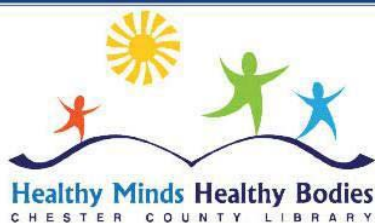
See Arts and Crafts by Seniors representing  
the 6 Senior Centers in Chester County!

**Where?** Lobby of the Chester County  
Governments Services Building,  
601 Westtown Road, West Chester

**When?** Weekdays in May, 8:30am – 5:00pm

"An artist cannot fail; it is a success to be one."  
~ Charles Horton Cooley

## SAVE THE DATE!!!



PROUD PARTNER OF THE CHESTER COUNTY LIBRARY

# COMMUNITY DAY

SUNDAY MAY 20, 2012

*Families Welcome!!*



## Exercise and Physical Activity Q&A

### 1. I'm not particularly active, and I haven't exercised in years. Is it safe for me to start now?

If you haven't been active for a long time, it's important to start out at a low level of effort and work your way up slowly. Beginning slowly will help you become more fit without straining your body.

### 2. I have a medical condition. Is it safe for me to exercise?

Exercise is safe for almost everyone. Studies show that people with arthritis, high blood pressure, diabetes, or heart disease benefit from regular exercise and physical activity. However, you may want to talk with your doctor about how your health condition might affect your ability to be active.

### 3. How much physical activity do I need?

The goal is to achieve at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity endurance activity on most or all days of the week. Every day is best, but doing anything is better than doing nothing at all.

### 5. How hard should I exercise?

Start from where you are and build up from there. Listen to your body. During moderate activity, for instance, you can sense that you are pushing yourself but that you aren't near your limit. As you become more fit, gradually make your activities more difficult.

### 6. Do I get enough physical activity in my regular day-to-day activities?

One way to find out is to monitor your daily activities. Did you do physical activities that get your body moving, such as yard work, walking the dog, raking leaves, or climbing stairs? How about an exercise or aerobics class? There are many ways to be active every day.

### 7. I'm 81 years old. Should I be exercising, and will it make a difference at my age?

Yes, staying active is important throughout life. Regular exercise and physical activity help you stay strong and fit enough to keep doing the things you enjoy.

### 8. Do I need to do other exercises in addition to my usual walking routine?

Most people tend to focus on one type of exercise or activity and think they're doing enough. Try to do all four types — endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance — because each one has different benefits.

### 9. I'm healthy now. Why do I need to be active?

Research shows that exercise and physical activity can maintain and even improve your health. Exercise and physical activity can help you manage and even prevent diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis.



Chester County  
Department of Aging Services

## NEW Logo: Chester County Department of Aging Services

The Chester County Department of Aging Services has wanted to have a logo for quite some time but nothing to date has caught the spirit of what the department does until now. The above logo was developed by a family member of one of our staff members.

The mission of the Chester County Department of Aging Services is to provide home and community based protection, advocacy and information and assistance services to people aged 60 and over and their families so that they may have choices about how they want to live with dignity and respect, lead independent and active lives and be free from abuse and neglect.

According to the 2010 Census, over 24% of the households in Chester County included individuals age 65 and over. Because of increasing numbers of older people and increases in life expectancy at older ages, the oldest segments of the senior population are growing the fastest.

With this growth the family unit provides the best opportunity for loved ones to age in the community with family support. This support in the home, supplemented by services provided under the programs administered by the Chester County Department of Aging Services, provide an alternative to placement in a long term care nursing facility that is not only a more expensive option for seniors, it is less desirable from a societal perspective.

We feel this logo symbolizes the growth of the family, the strength of its members, and the core values that bind it together.

Comments on the logo are welcome. Please email [Kelly Miehl](mailto:kelly.miehl@cheestercounty.org) at the Chester County Department of Aging Services or call her directly at 610-344-6672. ■

### 10. Is it better to join an exercise class or group, or exercise on my own?

The key is to find activities you truly enjoy. If you prefer individual activities, try swimming, gardening, or walking. If group activities appeal to you, try a sport such as basketball or join an exercise class. Some people find that going to a gym regularly or working with a fitness trainer helps them stay motivated. ■

Source: National Institute on Aging

For more information on Health and Aging Topics go to the following website: <http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/topics>



## System of Care Update

*Chester County visualizes a unified system of care that maximizes all resources around an individual or family. This system of care includes child and adult serving agencies and community partners that join with an individual or family to meet their goals.*

### Assessment Unit and System of Care

**Carol Fridirici and Aubrey Jackowski**  
Assessors

The assessment unit is responsible for completing Level of Care evaluations for consumers in order to evaluate their medical needs, cognitive functioning and physical abilities. This determines the programs and services that will meet their care needs. The assessment is individual centered with the goal of promoting self sufficiency and wellness and determines what the consumer and family are able to manage and areas where they need assistance.

The assessment team member is often the first face to face contact a consumer will have with our department. It is the assessor's responsibility to set up a meeting that will take place in the consumer's home, hospital, nursing home or Personal Care Home setting. When the assessor meets with the consumer we encourage family members to be present as it assists the assessor in obtaining a clear picture of the consumer's cognitive functioning, physical abilities and medical diagnosis. The assessment meeting aids the assessor in determining if family members can provide natural support systems. We also include community agency representatives who are currently working with the consumer to provide insight into the consumer's care needs and how our agencies can work together to provide a continuum of services and a single plan of care.

The assessors are able to provide referrals to community based resources the consumer and family may not be aware of. These resources may provide additional support in meeting the care needs of the consumer. The assessors have designated geographical areas in the county for assessment assignments and this allows the assessor to become familiar with local community resources and enables the assessor to pass this information on to the consumer and their families. Some of these resources are Meals On Wheels, Senior Center Information, Rover transportation, legal services, PACE, Ombudsman, and Food Assistance through local Food Banks, hospital support programs and subsidized senior housing.



## MEDICARE 101

If you will be joining the ranks of Medicare soon, are already in the Medicare system and have questions, or you just want to understand what this Federal program is all about, this session is for you. Members of the **APPRISE** program, Pennsylvania's volunteer statewide program of insurance consultation, will present an overview of Medicare including the definitions of Medicare A, B, C; explanation of the drug benefit (Part D), types of health care insurance available in Chester County, benefits available for low income beneficiaries and things to consider when selecting your medical coverage. A question and answer session will follow the presentations.

The current schedule includes:

**April 10<sup>th</sup>**: Phoenixville Hospital Sr Resource Cntr 1:00 PM

**April 12<sup>th</sup>**: Coatesville Sr. Center 5:30 PM

**April 25<sup>th</sup>**: Downingtown Sr. Center 7:00 PM

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>**: Kennett Area Senior Center 6:00 PM

**May 29<sup>th</sup>**: Chester County Library, Exton 7:00 PM

**June 12<sup>th</sup>**: Chester County Library, Exton 7:00 PM

**June 19<sup>th</sup>**: Brandywine Hospital 10:30 AM

**July 30<sup>th</sup>**: Chester County Library, Exton 7:00 PM

**August 15<sup>th</sup>**: Kennett Area Senior Center 6:00 PM

**September 20<sup>th</sup>**: Phoenixville Sr. Center 6:00 PM

For further information and/or to reserve a seat at one of the sessions at a senior center, please call the center. For other locations call our APPRISE Hotline at 610-344-5004.

Check the Calendar on our Website for changes or additions to this schedule. ■

If there is an immediate need for intervention, the assessor will make referrals to the county agencies that can provide mental health services, alcohol and drug abuse counseling or referrals to Children and Youth Services if the consumer needs assistance in caring for young children in the home. The assessment team also makes recommendations for services through the Options Program, PDA Waiver and Family Caregiver Support Programs which are administered by our department.

These services promote self-sufficiency and independence in order for the consumers to remain in their homes in a safe and healthy manor.

These are just some of the ways that our assessment unit applies the System of Care philosophy. ■



## ROVER NEWS!

### Shared Ride 101

At ROVER we talk about shared-ride service all of the time, because that is what we offer. We thought it would be helpful to offer some insight on the shared-ride program so that everyone has a clearer understanding of what it is and how it relates to them.

Since 1980 PennDOT has made grants available from the Pennsylvania Lottery Fund to subsidize demand responsive transportation systems in order to allow senior citizens age 65 or older to ride at reduced fares, currently at an 85% discount. ROVER is considered one of the Shared-Ride Program grantees. To be eligible a senior must register with the shared-ride provider by presenting an acceptable age verification document. The passenger must make trip requests at least one working day in advance and be willing to share the vehicle with other passengers. This means that you will likely share the vehicle with other passengers enroute to your destination. In many cases, your trip may well take longer than if you were going by yourself, so you must plan accordingly. This will often mean an earlier pick up at your origin and possibly a longer wait for your return ride. It may also mean waiting for other passengers to board.

Additionally, the shared-ride transportation service is often used by the Medical Assistance Transportation Program, by the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Program, by MH/IDD (Mental Health/Intellectual Developmental Disabilities) programs, by the Department of Labor and Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and by many other human service agencies and at times by the general public. This all means that the demographics of our passengers are quite varied. ROVER'S senior shared-ride service is door to door. Most of our vehicles are ADA accessible and passengers receive assistance from drivers with walking, boarding and exiting the vehicle to the door of their home or destination.

### What is 'Same Day' Service?

Once we close our scheduling for "next day" rides at 11AM, any requests for travel the next day become "same day" requests. By State guidelines we cannot schedule rides for the same day and bill the State for the cost of the trip; therefore, we must charge the passenger the full cost of the trip. In other words, a ride to the grocery store for a senior who scheduled the trip before 11AM the previous business day costs the passenger 75¢. If that same senior waits until after 11AM the previous business day or anytime the day of the requested trip, the trip will be at the full fare and



## Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program Application Forms Are Now Available

Eligible residents may begin claiming rebates on property taxes or rent paid in 2011. Each resident who received a rebate last year should have received by now either a 2011 application form or a letter from the department, if last year's claim was prepared using computer software rather than the PA-1000 booklet. Older adults must reapply for rebates every year.

### Income guidelines:

Income Range*	Homeowners Rebate	Renters Rebate
\$0 - \$8,000	\$650	\$650
\$8,001 - \$15,000	\$500	\$500
\$15,001 - \$18,000	\$300	----
\$18,001 - \$35,000	\$250	----

\*Remember to exclude one-half of Social Security, Supplemental Security Income and Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits when calculating eligibility income.

**The deadline to apply for a rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2011 is June 30, 2012.** Applications are available at the Chester County Department of Aging Services, 601 Westtown Road, Suite 130, West Chester, on line at [www.revenue.state.pa.us](http://www.revenue.state.pa.us) or by calling 1-888-222-9190.

If you need help completing the form, please go to your nearest Senior Center for assistance. ■

may cost a minimum of \$6.00, based on distance. We do not make up random guidelines or rules. Our "core file" which outlines how we are going to do business is submitted to the State and this is the document by which the State monitors our operation. So if you forget to schedule your transportation in a timely manner, please don't get angry when your customer service representative tells you how much the ride is actually going to cost you because it is "same day" service.

Please work within the parameters set by our funding agencies so we can efficiently provide paratransit services to everyone in Chester County. Through the flexibility of all parties we can continue to demonstrate to state and local officials that we don't view paratransit as an entitlement but as a very important service needed by many different people in our county. Please feel free to contact Anne Taylor at 484-696-3854, extension 350 if you have any questions. ■

Source: Rover Gazette February 2012



## Senior Cinema

Brad Bradlee, Aging Care Manager II

"Nobody wants to see a guy who's 74 hitting on a woman of any age. But I don't want to make geriatric movies about old people because they bore me too."

I'll give Woody Allen the benefit of the doubt and assume he wasn't dissing everyone of his own demographic as irredeemably dull. Or every movie featuring old people as jejune. With a little thought, I'm sure Woody could recall a few cinematic gems that get beyond the tedious representations of the elderly as "feisty" (see *Cocoon*), "sickly" (*Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*), "mentally deficient" (*On Golden Pond*), "depressed and lonely" (*Fried Green Tomatoes*), or "grumpy old men" (*Grumpy Old Men*).

As it happens, I have a short list of my own. These movies all have something to say about old age and individual complexity. If you have the privilege of working with the elderly, chances are you've moved beyond simplistic notions of what it means to be old. But why not help demystify the Golden Years for others lacking your experience? Invite some folks over for a movie night featuring one of these selections – enlighten your friends and enjoy some deserved entertainment yourself!

### *Ikiru* (1952)

Watanabe, a minor Tokyo bureaucrat, learns of his terminal illness and struggles to make sense of a life soon to end. But chancing upon a former co-worker who exudes an extraordinary joy and enthusiasm, he's inspired to take on an unlikely project that will give his life meaning. In his Great Movies reviews, Roger Ebert wrote "Over the years I have seen *Ikiru* every five years or so, and each time it has moved me, and made me think. And the older I get, the less Watanabe seems like a pathetic old man, and the more he seems like every one of us."

### Got Questions?? Contact us!!!

Information and Assistance services are always free of charge and available to all interested persons.

Call: 610-344-6350

Toll-free: 1-800-692-1100 extension 6350

TTY #: 610-344-5233 (Text Telephone)

601 Westtown Road, Suite 130

P.O. Box 2747

West Chester, PA 19380-0990

Send us an e-mail inquiry:

[ccaging@chesco.org](mailto:ccaging@chesco.org)

or visit our website

<http://www.chesco.org/aging>

### *The Savages* (2007)

Two self-centered adult siblings are forced to make choices when presented with the fact of their estranged father's dementia. Unsentimental yet compassionate, this film acknowledges a near impossible situation without resorting to phony closure. Internet reviewer extraordinaire Dave Vinson has blogged "If you're up for a black-as-night comedy, it's hard to top *The Savages* with Philip Seymour Hoffman and Laura Linney."

### *Atlantic City* (1980)

In a seamy apartment building, in a decayed pre-casino Atlantic City, live aging two-bit numbers runner Lou (Burt Lancaster) and oyster bar waitress Sally (Susan Sarandon). While the town looks hopefully towards a future of gambling glitz, Lou speaks only of his past mafia big-shot glory days – days that may exist only in his imagination. But when Sally finds herself in underworld trouble, Lou sees a last opportunity to amount to something. Disappointment, self-delusion, hope – not just a young man's condition.

### *Away From Her* (2006)

Julie Christie and Gordon Pinset star in the story of a man coping with the institutionalization of his Alzheimer's-afflicted spouse. The film confronts the couple's inevitable transition from lovers to strangers: "I'm going, but I'm not gone." Adapted from a story by Alice Munro.

### *Strangers in Good Company* (1991)

Reviewed in the *Washington Post* as "a kind of road movie sitting still," *Strangers in Good Company* is a Canadian indie featuring non-professional actresses playing themselves. Stranded in the isolated countryside when their bus breaks down, six very different elderly women are forced to fend for themselves. As they grow more comfortable with each other, the women slowly reveal themselves, recounting lives neither feeble nor boring.

Hmm, "geriatrics" with meaningful and interesting lives? Woody Allen, take note. ■

### Senior Centers

Senior Centers offer a variety of programs including exercise programs, health programs, meals, recreational and socialization activities.

In Chester County there are 6 Sr. Centers.

**Coatesville Area Sr. Center** 610-383-6900

**Downingtown Area Sr. Center** 610-269-3939

**Kennett Area Sr. Center** 610-444-4819

**Oxford Area Senior Center** 610-932-5244

**Phoenixville Sr. Adult Activity Center** 610-935-1515

**West Chester Area Sr. Center** 610-431-4242

Call one today, just stop in, or go to <http://chestercountyseniors.org/> for links to each center's website and more detailed information on their hours, programs and services.